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ABSTRACT

The role and status of English in Saudi Arabia are examined, with attention directed to: (1) English within the education system; (2) teachers of English; (3) English outside the education system; (4) materials support; (5) British support for the teaching of English; and (6) English syllabi at intermediate, secondary, and higher education levels. English is the only foreign language taught at the elementary and secondary school levels. In all government schools, English is taught as a compulsory subject at the intermediate stage (from 12 to 15 years of age) through the secondary stage (15 to 18 years of age). In addition, English is taught at the following universities: The University of Riyadh; The King Abdulaziz University, Jeddah; The University of Petroleum and Minerals, Dhahran; and The King Faysal University (Medicine, Architecture and Planning, Agriculture and Veterinary Science Faculties). The Riyadh Languages Institute is a commercial school that teaches both English and Arabic. In Saudi Arabia as a whole, there are currently about 150 British staff engaged primarily in English language teaching and/or materials production. Since very few of the Westerners and Asians working in Saudi Arabia have knowledge of Arabic, English is the medium of communication, and the ability to converse in English is likely to be helpful to the Saudi seeking employment. Most technical and military training courses undertaken overseas are preceded by English language courses. A report on visits to secondary and intermediate schools to assess language laboratories for English language teaching in Riyadh schools is appended. (SW)

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ENGLISH LANGUAGE TEACHING PROFILE June 1980

Country: SAUDI ARABIA

1. Role of English:

1.1 English is the first foreign language of Saudi Arabia and is the only foreign language taught at school level. French and German are taught in the Universities of the Kingdom.

1.2 Very few of the Westerners and Asians working in the Kingdom have any knowledge of Arabic, thus even at the most elementary level, English is the medium of communication between them and the Saudi and expatriate Arab population. However, all correspondence between foreign concerns and Saudi government institutions has to be written in both Arabic and English.

1.3 A number of Saudis eg doctors, engineers have studied in France or Germany and speak the languages fairly well, but Saudis who have studied in the United States or in Britain at secondary school, undergraduate, or postgraduate level (up to Masters of PhD degrees) often for periods of five years or more, speak and write extremely good English. Businessmen, too, who have travelled overseas extensively, and who have English-speaking contacts, invariably have an above-average command of the language. At the schools and universities in the Kingdom there is a marked difference in the level of English between those pupils who have lived abroad with their parents, or whose parents use English for business, professional or social purposes, and those pupils who have learned their English solely within the Saudi Arabian national education system. Some pupils at the secondary level have had so much exposure to English that their command of grammar, vocabulary and also the written language compares well with a native-speaker pupil of the same age. Sadly, at the other end of the scale, six years of English teaching in the schools has almost no effect at all, and many pupils can hardly utter or write a correct sentence, apart from one that has been learned by heart.

1.4 In spite of minimal results from the schools, English is still regarded as essential for training in the Kingdom or abroad, or further studies overseas, and as a valuable qualification for working in Saudi Arabia itself. Foreign businessmen visiting Saudi Arabia rarely speak Arabic and an ability to converse, even at the most rudimentary level in English, is likely to give one Saudi priority over another when job-hunting.

1.5 Most technical and military training courses undertaken overseas are preceded by English language courses often up to twelve months in length. The Ministry of Education is trying to reduce the amount of time, and hence money, spent on these pre-technical English language courses and states that there are sufficient institutes in the Kingdom eg the Institutes of Public Administration in Riyadh, Jeddah and Dammam which can provide adequate tuition and raise trainees' English to the required level.

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However, the present IPAs are not large enough to cater for all government trainees, and many of them undertake both English language studies and technical training entirely overseas. This applies particularly to trainees from the Ministries of Defence and Interior: most of the NCOs and some of the officers, from military and para-military organisations have little or no formal education (rarely beyond intermediate school level) and in order to boost recruitment training courses are offered overseas eg Britain, the United States, Pakistan etc which must be preceded by lengthy periods of EL training in those countries. The British Council has been asked to organise ELT courses in the UK for a number of these groups eg Special Security Forces; Saudi Arabian Frontier Force.

2. English within the Education System

Schools

2.1 In all government schools English is taught as a compulsory subject from the first year of the Intermediate stage. Instruction continues with six lessons per week throughout the three years up to the "Kifa'a" Intermediate Certificate examination and is followed by a further three years of compulsory instruction (again, six lessons a week) at Secondary level leading to the Saudi Arabian General School Leaving Certificate. Passes are required in all subjects in the two national examinations for promotion to, respectively, Secondary and University level.

Intermediate schooling:	From 12 - 15 years of age
Secondary schooling:	From 15 - 18 years of age

2.2 English is also taught in the last two years of the six-year primary stage at two private schools in Riyadh, but otherwise is not taught at this level in the government schools.

In the second and third year of the Secondary schools pupils can choose between Literary and Scientific sections. The syllabus for each section is different, and pupils in the Scientific section use texts and readers which deal with scientific subjects.

2.3 The Intermediate and Secondary school syllabus (see Appendix A) is devised by the Ministry of Education, Curriculum Department, and is rigidly adhered to. With minor variations eg the choice of supplementary reader, the attached syllabus has been in use for over ten years, but as from September 1980 a new series of English language textbooks, written and published by Macmillans, will be introduced into the first years of each of the Intermediate and Secondary levels. Macmillans plan to produce books for the two second years for 1981 and for the third years by 1982.

Macmillans have appointed a Liaison Officer, based in Riyadh, whose task is to co-ordinate materials' production and arrange induction courses with the Ministry of Education and the three main Zone Education Offices (Riyadh - Central Zone; Jeddah - Western Zone; Damman - Eastern Zone). The Saudi Heads of the Departments of Intermediate and Secondary education at the Ministry of Education, Riyadh, and inspectors from the Zone Offices, and selected Saudi teachers vet the contents and illustrations in the textbooks, and recommendations are then fed back via the Liaison Officer to the production team in Britain. These

modifications are then incorporated into the draft version of the textbook which is then returned to the Ministry of Education for a final vetting by a panel consisting of the Deputy Minister for Technical Affairs and members of the Curriculum and Research Department.

The new textbooks will be used initially in the Boys' schools; if they are successful they will eventually replace the Longmans' series in the Girls' schools. Boys and girls have the same syllabus and the same examinations.

2.4 Inspection of Schools

In each of the three main Zone Offices there are three inspectors (Indian, Egyptian or Sudanese) whose main tasks throughout the academic year are as follows:

a. to write reports on teachers' performance

b. to ensure that teachers follow the syllabus as laid down in the syllabus document which is sent to all Headmasters. The usual way of checking this is through the teacher's "Lesson Preparation Book", a document which contains a plan for each lesson given during the year. It usually includes the page number in a set reader, the exercise number in a grammar book or a few sentences written by the teacher to be studied (translated etc) for homework. These lesson preparation books are kept up to date, and are always very neatly written out.

c. to ensure that books are distributed from the Central Stores to the schools (books usually arrive after the beginning of the academic year, and are not completely distributed until some time in the second term. There are invariably shortages).

d. to organise the 'mock' examinations and, in conjunction with the Teacher Training Department at the Ministry of Education, to set the third year national Certificate examinations. (Examinations for the first and second years of the Intermediate and Secondary levels are set and marked internally.).

e. to supervise the marking of the Certificate examinations.

Universities

2.5 English is taught at the following universities in the Kingdom:

1. The University of Riyadh

2. The King Abdulaziz University, Jeddah

3. The University of Petroleum and Minerals, Dhahran

4. The King Faysal University:

(a) Faculties of Medicine and Architecture and Planning (Dammam)

(b) Faculties of Agriculture and Veterinary Science (al-Hufoof)

2.6 The University of Riyadh

Up to the end of the academic year 1978-1979 each Faculty (Arts; Education; Science; Engineering; Agriculture; Administrative Sciences;) employed its own English teaching staff who ran independent programmes throughout the four years of each course. The number of hours per week differed in each Faculty and in each year. Most of the teaching material consisted of standard commercial textbooks (eg "Practice and Progress") with some special materials produced by members of staff. At the Faculty of Medicine a team of 12 (8 for the Men's section and 4 for the Women's) ran a programme of scientific/medical English for students in the pre-medical year.

At the beginning of the academic year 1979 - 80, the Centre for European Languages and Translation (CELT) was established in the Faculty of Arts and took over responsibility for the English Language programme in all the faculties of the Universities, including the recruitment of teachers. Students now have one semester of full-time English language studies (25 hours per week) and if they pass the examination at the end of the first semester they do not have any further English studies during their University careers in spite of the fact that many of the teaching staff in the specialist subjects can only lecture in English. Appendix B which outlines the programme for pre-medical students, is available from Central Information Unit, English Language Division.

2.7 King Abdulaziz University, Jeddah

The English Language Centre, run by the British Council, was established in 1975 and was originally set up to provide English courses for the new Faculties of Medicine and Engineering which were to be English-medium. Since then the work has expanded as more Faculties and Departments have asked for English language courses.

The Director of the ELC is a British Council officer seconded to the University, and there are approximately 75 teaching staff (the majority being ELT qualified, the others being specialist staff in science and other subjects) and 25 ancillary staff including TV production and engineering experts; three staff working in the reprographics unit; three technicians working in the Audio studio producing recorded material for use in the two language laboratories.

ESP courses are arranged for the following Faculties:

1. Faculty of Medicine (120 men; 160 women) Foundation programme of 20 hours per week initially reducing to 12 hours. Seminar skills and essay writing for intermediate students; training for the TRAB and PLAB examinations.

2. College of Engineering (300 students) ESP programme of 16 hours per week.

3. School of Environmental Design (100 students) ESP programme of 16 hours per week continuing with 8 hours per week.

4. College of Earth Sciences (35 students) 8 hours per week for 2 years in preparation for English-medium instruction in the third year (also 8 hours per week programme for postgraduates).

5. Institute of Meteorology and Arid Land Studies (30 students) 16 hours per week programme for students converting to English-medium studies.

6. Faculty of Science (380 students - Arabic medium). Reading course in general scientific English: 5 hours per week for one semester. A course in listening skills.

2.8 The University of Petroleum and Minerals, Dhahran

The English Language programme is in two parts:

1. Orientation English Programme - 20 hours per week for two consecutive semesters.

2. University English Programme - 3 hours per week continuing for three further semesters.

(The first programme totals about 560 hours; the continuation programme about 125).

Both programmes teach general English. Apart from a course of technical report writing in the final semester of the University English Programme there is no ESP. UPM is basically an American University and the OEP (Orientation English Programme) corresponds to the American University Composition Course. Other subjects taught in the first two semesters are: mathematics and general science. Most specialist courses at UPM are taught in English, although it is envisaged that at some time in the future a switch will be made to Arabic, after which English will be taught as a University subject.

The Director of the OEP is American, and he has about 50 staff - increasing to 60 this coming academic year (1980-81) as more than 200 new students will be enrolled at the University. There are about 30 British staff, including two British Council-recruited members, and the senior instructors become Course Co-ordinators after two or three years.

The main textbooks in use are:

English for Today
Kernel Lessons Intermediate
Kernel Lessons Plus
Improving Aural Comprehension

2.9 King Faysal University, Dammam and Hufoof

From 1975 to 1977 English language instruction in the four faculties was organised through a team of teachers under British Council management. The project closed in August 1977, and a Sudanese was appointed Head of Department: he is based in the Dammam offices, and the programme at Hufoof is run by an Egyptian. The aim of the English Language Department is to equip students with sufficient skills in English to enable them to cope with predominantly English-medium instruction in the four faculties.

The ESP approach has, in spite of the declared aim of the Head of Department, been abandoned, and he prefers to run courses in general English with some additional scientific material. The following are the textbooks used in the intensive course of 28/30 hours per week during the first semester:

English Sentence Structure - University of Michigan
Improving Aural Comprehension - University of Michigan
Handwriting Workbook - English Language Services
Beginning Scientific English - Royds and Irmak
Writing Scientific English - Swales
Nucleus Biology - Adamson and Bates
Study Skills - Yorkey

3. Teachers of English

3.1

Level:	Total:	Saudis	Brits	BC Recruited:	Other Nats. (incl. Amer)
Schools:					
Intermed:	1393	295	-	-	1198
Sec'd'ry:	479	36	15	3	428
IPA					
Riyadh	15	-	5	2	10
Jeddah	6	-	2	-	4
Dammam	6	-	2	-	4
Universities:					
Riyadh (CELT)+	45	-	10	5*	35
King Abdulaziz Univ. Jeddah	75	-	75	75	-
King Faysal Univ. Dammam	30	-	-	-	30
Univ. of Petroleum & Minerals Dhahran	60	- /	30	2	30

Notes:

\+ Centre for European Languages and Translation, Faculty of Arts (abbreviated to F.Arts), University of Riyadh, now responsible for the University EL programme and for EL staff recruitment.

* All of whom are resigning in July 1980

/ A Saudi Director is due to take up post in September 1980.

3.2 As can be seen from the above table the teaching of English is almost totally in the hands of expatriates (including Arabs) and only 18% of the school teachers are Saudis. Nonetheless, the latter figure represents a marked improvement since 1973 when there were only 7 Saudi teachers of English in the school system.

This increase has been brought about by a three-year training and "up-grading" scheme for some secondary school graduates and Teacher Training Institute (Dar Mualimeen) graduates who have taught in the primary stage for a few years. The Ministry of Education sends a letter to all schools and TTIs in the Kingdom towards the end of the academic year and organises an examination in Riyadh from which, currently, 75 applicants are selected for the three-year course.

The first year consists of a full-time (9½ months, 5 days per week, 5 hours per day) language course at the British Council ELTI in Riyadh. This is followed by a two-year language-improvement and teaching methodology course at the Universities of Manchester or Newcastle, or at the Moray House College of Education, Edinburgh.

Up to 1979 there were 60 students on the course, 24 of whom were sent to the United States and 36 to the three universities mentioned above. In September 1979 the Ministry of Education decided to cancel the agreements with the American universities, and all students are now sent to the UK universities.

3.3 The 36 Saudi teachers in the Secondary schools are all graduates of the Faculty of Education, University of Riyadh. They have taken a four-year BA course and specialised in English Language (Faculty of Arts syllabus) and have also studied teaching methodology, educational history and psychology.

Of the 82% non-Saudi teachers in the school system most are Egyptians who are seconded from their own system to the Kingdom for four years. The others are Jordanian, Palestinian, Syrian, Sudanese, Indian, Pakistani, and a few British staff, of whom 3 (in Taif, Dammam and Qateef) are British Council-recruited. These three have been teaching in the Kingdom for 12, 13 and 8 years respectively. The British Council no longer recruits teachers for the secondary schools, and during the last two years the Ministry of Education has adopted a deliberate policy of recruiting only Muslim teachers for the schools.

3.4 Apart from the three-year programme outlined above, and the Teacher Training programme at the Faculty of Education, University of Riyadh, there are currently no courses or in-service programmes for teachers of English. However, the following courses took place between 1977 and 1979:

1. Summer course at the University of Essex for students from the Faculty of Education, Riyadh: 1977

2. A three-week course in Language Laboratory usage and materials production arranged by the British Council and the Riyadh Zone Education Office in April/May 1979. The course was attended by 30 Saudi teachers, the three inspectors from Riyadh Zone and two teachers from a Ministry of Defence school, Riyadh (see Appendix C for report).

3. A similar course, held in November 1979, arranged by the Ministry of Education, Riyadh, which took place in Riyadh, and Dammam. The course was devised by the Riyadh Zone Office Inspectorate in conjunction with staff from the Institute of Public Administration, Riyadh.

3.4 There are no professional organisations for teachers of English.

4. Materials support:

4.1 As mentioned in 2.4 most school pupils finally receive all their prescribed books. Students at universities and the IPAs buy their books, with a considerable discount, from a Textbook Centre, and other institutes with an English Language programme obtain their books by means of a block order direct to the publisher, thereby by-passing the local booksellers.

Most written material used in ELT throughout the Kingdom is commercially produced, though some staff at University level (especially at KAAU, Jeddah) produce their own courses. As can be seen from the school syllabus (App. A) the course books are woefully out-of-date, and the readers have complicated plots which are set in an environment alien to the average Saudi student, and the structures and vocabulary load are way above the students' linguistic level.

Libraries in the universities are extremely well-stocked with standard textbooks and reference works, but school libraries are either poorly stocked or non-existent. Even in some of the better schools in the major cities the English language section consists of a few battered readers (one copy of each) and invariably an untouched set of dictionaries or encyclopaedias.

4.2 Language laboratories are installed at all the universities where they are regularly used, and the recorded material (either part of a prescribed course-book, or produced by the teaching staff) is made into an integral part of a year's or semester's course. Most secondary schools throughout the Kingdom also have language laboratories (Sony, Tannberg) but apart from the language laboratory course (see App. C), which is not an official part of the school syllabus, there is no recorded material available. The laboratories are rarely used and, very often, once the first technical breakdown has occurred, the door is firmly locked, and the equipment remains untouched. The problem here is the lack of a properly qualified maintenance technician either at the school, or in the Zone Education Office. The few qualified staff available are hard pressed to repair even simple equipment such as cassette recorders, and do not have the training or experience to tackle a major language laboratory repair or overhaul. No Saudis are employed at this level, and attempts to recruit staff from overseas eg Pakistan, have failed. The Saudis will not pay for any specialist training they may need for the machines in the schools, and the salaries offered are unattractive.

4.3 Some school teachers in Riyadh borrow documentary or language teaching films from the British Council.

5. English outside the Education System

5.1 There is one commercial school in Riyadh, the Riyadh Languages Institute, which was opened in November 1978. Both English and Arabic are taught by one full-time member of staff for each language with four part-time teachers. The teaching year is divided into three terms and students are mainly local businessmen, shopkeepers, hotel and bank staff, civil servants (other than from the Ministry of Education - see 6.6) and some school pupils. Standard British textbooks are used eg Kernel Lessons while the Collier-Macmillan series eg English for Banking is used for specialist groups.

In Jeddah the expatriate schools run out-of-school classes in EFL.

5.2 Practically all Ministries, Government institutes (eg Military, para-Military, Police, Traffic Departments etc), Jeddah and Riyadh Oil Refineries, Riyadh Military Hospital, and large Saudi companies such as ARAMCO, Saudia (Saudi Arabian Airlines), SABIC (Saudi Arabian Basic Industries Corporation) have their own Training Centres and run programmes which include an English language component for their employees.

6. British support for the Teaching of English

6.1.1 British Council ELTI Riyadh
Director of Studies (BC permanent staff)
6 British staff (recruited by the Ministry of Education)

6.1.2 University of Riyadh
5 language instructors at the Centre for European Languages and Translation. Guaranteed contracts to terminate in September 1980.

6.1.3 Institute of Public Administration, Riyadh
2 language teachers. Guaranteed contracts to be continued.

6.1.4 University of Petroleum and Minerals, Al-Dhahran
2 language teachers on guaranteed contracts (both renewing).

6.1.5 King Abdulaziz University, Jeddah
English Language Centre Director (on secondment from British Council)
75 ELT and scientific staff (Council recruited)

6.1.6 Jeddah Oil Refinery
Director of Studies) British Council recruited.
2 language teachers)

6.2 There are currently approximately 150 British staff engaged in ELT work in the Kingdom. The majority are concerned with direct teaching and/or materials production but none is employed as an advisor, inspector or teacher trainer, and there is no English language by radio or TV in the Kingdom.

6.3 There are a number of Britons employed outside the education system as ELT Project Directors or Directors of Studies, eg National Guard/Cable and Wireless ELT project; King Faysal Air Academy/BAC First Year ELT project; Saudi Arabian Airlines (Saudia) Training Centre ELT Director.

6.4 Nil.

6.5 As listed.

6.6 The British Council ELTI, Riyadh, runs evening courses for about 300 students, most of whom are employees at the Ministry of Education, Riyadh. The teaching year consists of 4 terms of 8 weeks each. The 17 staff are employed on an hourly-paid basis.

7. The American Language Centre terminated its English Language teaching activities in June 1977, and moved to smaller offices in Riyadh which house a library and an Information Centre. The Americans have not run any EL courses since then, but have concentrated on administering the TOEFL test to applicants for places at Universities in the US.

8. Nil.

9. General Statement

9.1 There is a considerable amount of English language usage and English language teaching activity in the Kingdom; this in spite of criticism from many quarters particularly the traditional, pro-Islamic, anti-western factions and even from a small number of people in important positions in the Saudi academic world. Nonetheless, most administrators and decision-makers appreciate the need for and usefulness of English for the Kingdom's development, and give the language a reasonable priority in their training or academic programmes.

One can also imagine that there are a good number of "ultra-modernists" who would like to have a bilingual population, and who know that the Kingdom is rich enough to buy the most expensive equipment for language teaching, and to pay very attractive salaries to teaching staff: certainly, when a Saudi has studied the language over a long period, and has spent a few years in an English-speaking environment, his command of English is impressive; but the level of attainment within the Kingdom is low and the Ministry of Education, and some of the universities, are simply not willing to spend the sums required to establish professional, modern English language programmes.

The problems within the schools are as follows:

1. Lack of a properly trained and motivated teaching cadre. Most of the Egyptians (and other expatriate Arabs) look upon their four years in the Kingdom as a penance. They have little interest in the progress of their pupils, and their main concern is to "complete the syllabus" page by page throughout the year. In no way do they question the suitability or effectiveness of materials, and they employ outdated teaching methods principally to enable pupils to pass questionable examinations.

2. The Saudi teachers are better trained, and initially better motivated than the expatriate staff, but there is no co-ordinated programme of "in-service" or further training (eg summer courses overseas or seminars in the Kingdom), and one feels that the Saudi trainees who have studied in UK, and have been exposed to professional teaching methods, lose momentum once they return to their own system. The new textbook series should engender fresh enthusiasm, but it will have to be accompanied by a more dynamic attitude at the Ministry of Education with regard to refresher training and incentives. There is scope here for British Council involvement; but payment for the "Language Laboratory Course" held in 1979 took 8 months to complete, and the delay indicates the Ministry attitude to spending its own money.

3. The examination system needs revising completely; but as long as Headmasters and Directors of Education expect a 95% pass-rate, and teachers' performance and reputation rest on the number of

pupils who pass the various examinations it is highly unlikely that much will be changed in the foreseeable future. (See Appendix D for the 1980 examinations). One hopes that by 1982, when the last of the new textbooks are introduced, there will be an impetus to change the present examination system.

4. Language laboratories (over 300 in schools, but rarely used) must be incorporated into the teaching programme more effectively, and should be used much more for listening comprehension rather than simply drills and exercises: this is probably the only way of exposing pupils to a native-speaker accent. Appendix C - The Language Laboratory in English Language Teaching in Riyadh Schools, M.J. Stimson, May 1979, is available from Central Information Unit, English Language Division.

5. More native-speakers (either British or American) should be recruited to the Inspectorates and the schools: but while the Ministry of Education offers such miserly salaries and housing allowances (maximum of three months' salary = SR15,000: but a small unfurnished flat in Riyadh will cost SR 35,000 per annum) to its staff, it remains impossible to attract well-qualified, experienced and committed teachers to the Kingdom.

Universities

Most students at the four secular universities in the Kingdom - King Abdulaziz, Jeddah; King Faysal, Dammam; Petroleum and Minerals, Dhahran, and the University of Riyadh - require English for their undergraduate studies, reference and research work. Only at KAAU, Jeddah, has an ESP programme been adopted: at the other three, the English Department programmes range from an outright rejection of ESP (UPM); a half-hearted mixture of ESP and general English (KFU), and a one semester, 25 hours a week, intensive course at the University of Riyadh. (Here, no further English is taught to non-specialists after the first semester in spite of the fact that many of the teaching staff responsible for courses up to the final year are non-Arabic speakers). The Dean of the Faculty of Arts, University of Riyadh, has said "...teaching English is a waste of time; all subjects can be taught in Arabic..."

At UPM, where all courses except Islamic studies are taught in English, one wonders whether students might not spend their first year studying language more relevant to their future academic needs. There is scope here for a professional ESP programme with British Council involvement. The present American Director (PhD American Literature) is to be replaced by a Saudi (PhD Linguistics) as from September 1980, and one hopes he will be more willing to listen to arguments in favour of ESP.

At KFU all subjects are also taught in English, but since the closure of the British Council project in 1977, the English Department has been run by a Sudanese who has neither the staff nor the equipment for a professional programme. Unlike UPM, where staff are housed, rent-free in well-furnished villas, KFU offers a very meagre housing allowance, and no EL teacher of any standing will sign a contract. At present the teaching staff consists of mainly expatriate Arabs, and a few recently graduated Americans.

There is scope too, at the University of Riyadh for a subject-orientated EL programme: but English language staff (designated "instructors" rather than lecturers, or some such suitably academic-sounding title) receive the lowest salaries and a pittance for a housing allowance. All five British Council recruited staff are resigning in July 1980, and the Council will not undertake further recruitment.

It is sad to record this, but until the Saudi authorities, in general, give the English language and its teachers the status it merits in view of its importance to the future of the Kingdom, most English language programmes will remain unsatisfactory and unprofessional.

Appendix A

English Language Syllabus -

Secondary Schools - Sa'udi Arabia 1979-80

1st Year 6 Periods (4 written; 2 oral)

1.	A First Book in Comprehension, Precis and Composition. (L G Alexander)	Chapters 1 and 2 (except no's 24/27 and 38)
2.	Living English Structure for Schools (W Stannard Allen)	Various exercises
3.	The Pearl (J Steinbeck)	Whole book
4.	Traveller's Cheque and Other Stories (Pleasant Books in Easy English, IV)	5 stories:- 1. The Winter's Snow 2. Murder in Flat No. 7 3. A Useful Stick 4. Fresh Air 5. The Milk Plan

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2nd Year

A. Scientific Section 6 Periods (3 written; 3 oral)

1.	A.F.B.C.P.C.	Chapter 3, texts 1-20
2.	L.E.S.S.	Various exercises
3.	T.C. & O.S.	4 stories:- 1. Laughter in Court 2. A Dog's Life 3. Take Your Opportunity 4. A Traveller's Cheque
4.	Oil (Longman Structural Readers, IV)	4 chapters:- 1. What is oil? 2. The Oil Regions of the World 3. Refining Oil 4. The Uses for Oil

B. Literary Section 6 Periods (3 written; 3 oral)

1.	A.F.B.C.P.C.	Chapter 3, texts 1-20
		Chapter 4, texts 1-5
2.	L.E.S.S.	Various exercises
3.	T.C. & O.S.	3 stories:
		1. A Dog's Life
		2. Miss Smith Makes a Journey
		3. Laughter in Court
4.	Vice - Versa (New Method Supplementary Reader, V)	Whole Book

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3rd Year

A. Scientific Sections 6 Periods (3 written; 3 oral)

1.	A.F.B.C.P.C.	Chapter 4, texts 61-67
2.	L.E.S.S.	Various exercises
3.	Easier Scientific English Practice (Thornley)	12 chapters:
		1. The Development of Rubber
		2. Problems of Space Travel
		3. Moonlight
		4. Fires Long Ago
		5. Thomas Edison's Inventions
		6. Oil in the Earth
		7. Bees and Colour
		8. Atoms and Elements
		9. Galileo Tries a New Instrument
		10. The Work of Louis Pasteur
		11. Anaesthetics
		12. The World Population
4.	Round the World in 80 Days (Simplified English series - Longman)	Whole Book

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B. Literary Section 6 Periods (3 written; 3 oral)

1.	A.F.B.C.P.C.	Chapter 4, texts 66-75
2.	L.E.S.S.	Various exercises
3.	Easier English Practice (Thornley)	12 chapters:- 1. The Small House at Allington 2. Rupert of Hentzan 3. The Danger of Lying in Bed 4. Gulliver's Travels 5. The Silver Box 6. Wanderthirst 7. Robinson Crusoe 8. Rebecca Takes Charge 9. The Dream 10. Arabella Hardy 11. Penny Postage 12. Life
4.	R.T.W. in 80 Days	Whole Book

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9.6.79

Appendix B

UNIVERSITY OF RIYADH

CENTRE FOR EUROPEAN LANGUAGES AND TRANSLATION

PREMEDICAL INTENSIVE ENGLISH PROGRAMME SYLLABUSES

Area of Study	Books/Materials	Hours per week
1. REGULAR INTENSIVE COURSE		
General science orientated language use	Basic English for Science	10
Language of science/academic discourse	Nucleus Biology	5
Spoken language/listening skills	Nucleus Biology department prepared materials*	5
Composition - with grammar, vocabulary etc; reading skill, summary, note-making	Read and Note department prepared materials*	5
'Rhetoric' editing/rewriting		
		25
2. CONSOLIDATED COURSE		
General science orientated language use	Basic English for Science	10
Grammar and elementary language aspects	department prepared materials*	5
Spoken/listening	" " " *	5
Writing guided composition Reading	" " " *	5
		25
3. ACCELERATED COURSE		
General science orientated language use	English in Basic Medical Science English in Physical Science	10 5
Spoken/listening	department prepared materials*	5
Writing/Project/Research	" " " *	5
		25

* or alternative book

THE LANGUAGE LABORATORY IN ENGLISH LANGUAGE TEACHING IN RIYADH SCHOOLS

A report on visits to Secondary and Intermediate Schools and recommendations

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With the willing cooperation of Mr Mohammed Masood Siddiki, the Chief Inspector of English for Riyadh Schools, I was able to inspect the schools detailed below. I was accompanied and greatly assisted in these visits by Mr Abdul Aziz Afify, one of the Inspectors. The comments that follow are, however, entirely my own.

16 APRIL: BAKR SECONDARY SCHOOL

There is one 32-booth Telex language laboratory in the school. This seemed to be used fairly regularly, though only on an audio-active basis because of lack of cassettes.

18 APRIL: RIYADH SECONDARY SCHOOL

There are two 32-booth Telex laboratories in the school. One functions on an irregular basis as no periods are timetabled and there are insufficient cassettes for student machines. The other laboratory was used at the time of my visit as a store room

21 APRIL: SADIQ SECONDARY SCHOOL

Has two 32-booth Boemi Audio Active laboratories. No teacher was responsible for the laboratories and they are used by only 10 students for 20 minutes each day as part of an activity option.

EL-FAISAL SECONDARY SCHOOL

Has a portable laboratory but this was lost in a recent fire.

22 APRIL: FAROUK SECONDARY SCHOOL

One Audio-active laboratory consisting of 20 headsets connected to a portable Philips console. Not used at all and only Part I of 'An English Course for the Language Laboratory' was in the school.

YAMOUK SECONDARY SCHOOL

Two Telex 32-booth audio-active comparative laboratories. These were used regularly and fairly effectively to judge by the lesson seen. However, there were an inadequate number of cassettes for the booths.

23 APRIL: ABNAA SECONDARY SCHOOL

A 25-booth Tecnosud laboratory incorporating video was in the school. This is a sophisticated laboratory which the teacher found difficult to work effectively on an audio-active comparative basis. Only used for 9 periods a week in all.

ABI TEMAM SECONDARY SCHOOL

Two 32-booth Telex laboratories. One was not used at all, while the other was used only 9 periods. There were no cassettes available for students so it was used only on an audio-active basis.

MAHAD AL-NOUR SCHOOL

This is a school for blind children. At present it has only 10 headsets, 1 tape-recorder and 1 cassette recorder but all are locked in a cupboard and not used. The school is shortly to get a laboratory but nobody knows which kind which is a pity as cassette booths would be extremely useful for library work with blind children.

24 APRIL: MAHAD AL MOHALAMEED SCHOOL

This is a Primary Teacher Training Institute running a 3-year course. It has two 32-booth Telex laboratories, one of which is not used. The other appeared in need of repair and is only used on an audio-active basis as there are no cassettes for students. It is used for 15 periods a week with each class having one period in the laboratory.

MAHAD EL HASSOON SCHOOL

It has a Sony 36-booth laboratory. The teachers were aware of its possibilities but were handicapped by lack of materials. In an average week it is used for only 10 lessons in all, despite the fact that there are 16 classes in the school.

28 APRIL: SUDEMENIAH SECONDARY SCHOOL

It has two 32-booth Tony Boemi laboratories. These are audio-active only and are used by each class for one period a week in the 1st and 2nd years only. Thus one laboratory is used for 5 periods a week and the other for 3.

29 APRIL: BEN ZAIDUN INTERMEDIATE SCHOOL

RAZI INTERMEDIATE SCHOOL

Both these schools had a cassette-player and 5 or 6 cassettes covering some of the passages from 'Living English for the Arab World', a story or two and a cassette on pronunciation. They do not have laboratores.

PALESTINE INTERMEDIATE SCHOOL

This school does not have a laboratory, cassette player or tapes.

30 APRIL: MOATASIN INTERMEDIATE SCHOOL

Has one cassette recorder and a small number of cassettes, much as above.

TAMIN EL-DARI INTERMEDIATE SCHOOL and
IBN MEKAFA INTERMEDIATE SCHOOL

Neither school has audio equipment of any kind.

Comments:

The picture that emerged during the visits detailed above was of Secondary schools that were often over-provided with laboratories as a result of the building contractors having incorporated laboratories into original plans, and yet all schools lacked sufficient tapes and cassettes to use in such laboratories. Moreover, the laboratories were insufficiently used, partly because the teachers were not always sure how to, but more specifically because work in the language laboratory is not part of the syllabus.

In Intermediate Schools the most pressing need is for suitable material in cassette or tape form to be used on the cassette-players at present and in the language laboratories when these are installed.

One other feature of all schools visited was the willingness of the teachers to learn about possible uses for the language laboratory in English teaching.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. SYLLABUS

1.1 As was noted above, laboratories are not likely to be used fully until work in them is incorporated into the syllabus. Since any syllabus is based on textbooks chosen centrally it is important that new textbooks be developed that include tape and cassette work. Such material should also be suitable for use on portable cassette recorders in outlying areas.

1.2 Selected publishing companies have already been approached to develop new textbooks suitable for Intermediate and Secondary Schools in Saudi Arabia. It has been suggested that pilot editions will be available in 1980 for use in Year I of a few schools. However, it will take at least 4 years for the course to be revised, printed and incorporated fully into the schools and examination syllabus.

1.3 In the meantime it seems likely that many schools will have language laboratories bought for them and these will fall into disuse unless decisions are taken regarding the period prior to the introduction of the new Saudi Arabian course.

1.4 I would suggest the following interim measures:

1.4.1 Intermediate Schools

At present there is no course involving taped material, though some of the dialogues from 'Living English for the Arab World' have been put on cassettes, along with a few stories and pronunciation drills. Every effort should be made to increase the number of listening comprehensions, drills, stories and other material on tape. The British Council English Language Officer may be able to help here, and there are good recording facilities at the Zone Office that could be utilized. Support materials ie pictures, flannel boards, cut-outs etc should also be widely distributed.

1.4.2 Secondary Schools

Most secondary schools with laboratories now have copies of

'An English Course for the Language Laboratory' designed by the Curriculum and Research Department of the Ministry of Education. Some of the accompanying tapes and cassettes are in need of re-recording but, as an interim measure, this course should be used in the 1st and 2nd years where there is no external examination. The Inspectorate could urge the use of this course for one or two periods a week in each class and should suggest changes in the syllabus and internal examinations accordingly.

2. LANGUAGE LABORATORIES

2.1 I understand that a large number of laboratories will be purchased in the near future. In order to avoid some of the problems noted in my comments on schools above I would suggest the following:

2.1.1 The proposed publisher of the new course, the British Council and the Ministry of Education should jointly discuss the kind of laboratories required for the text books being written.

2.1.2 Any laboratories purchased should be Audio-Active-Comparative. That is, they should have the facility for students to record and compare in individual booths. Because of the lack of cassettes for students booths noted in schools and the ease with which cassettes are damaged, I would recommend reel-to-reel students' machines. The teacher's console should contain both a tape and a cassette recorder.

2.2 The three manufacturers most likely to fulfil these requirements are:

1. Sign Electronics
2. Sony
3. Tandberg

2.3 The possibility of manufacturers providing servicing facilities, perhaps through a local agent, for a number of years after purchase should be discussed. Some companies are also prepared to run training courses for technicians and this point should also be investigated.

2.4 Given the present size of classes and lack of technical assistance it would be as well to contemplate purchasing 32- or 36-booth laboratories.

2.5 Where space within the school permits, there is much to be said for arranging the students booths around the outside of the room in a U shape.

2.6 In some cases schools have two laboratories where only one is necessary. The Ministry should investigate the feasibility of transferring laboratories to other schools in cases like this.

3. TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE

3.1 Many of the laboratories at present in schools are in need of servicing, but there are too few technicians at the Zone Office to

maintain the equipment. It is important that the number of trained technicians be increased if the laboratories are to be utilised fully.

3.2 As mentioned above (2.3) manufacturers could be approached regarding the possibility of servicing contracts and running courses for technicians.

3.3 If manufacturers cannot provide this service, the British Council could arrange for trainee technicians to be placed on suitable courses and could, with additional staff, run Technical English courses for trainees at their Language Teaching Institute in Riyadh.

4. FUTURE TRAINING OF TEACHERS

4.1 Implicit throughout this report has been the assumption that properly used a language laboratory is a useful aid in English teaching. However, it should be seen by all teachers of English as part of their course and all need to be trained in its use.

4.2 Since there is an urgent need for large numbers to be trained in the near future, and because a course on the Language Laboratory depends upon a good knowledge of basic English teaching procedures, I would suggest the following:

4.2.1 The British Council, the Inspectors of English at the Zone Office and the leader of the publishing project for the proposed textbooks together investigage the possibility of running a basic refresher course, incorporating any new published material, in September/October 1979 and 1980. Two 2-week courses with 20 teachers on each course covering such elements of English Language Teaching as presentation, practice, and composition would prepare 40 teachers for each of the Language laboratory courses suggested below.

4.2.2 Two further Language Laboratory Courses, each for 40 teachers, be held, preferably after the initial training described above, on two occasions in 1980.

4.2.3 That each laboratory course be staffed by 2 lecturers from England assisted by staff from the British Council, Riyadh.

4.2.4 Such courses should be held in winter (say February and November 1980) to avoid problems with heat and noise.

4.2.5 If possible, each course should be based on a school with two language laboratories.

4.2.6 The laboratory courses should be of two weeks' duration, be practical in orientation and held in the evening to allow tutors to assist teachers in the schools in the morning.

4.3 At a later stage when the numbers to be trained are not so great the English Language Teaching Institute, Riyadh should investigate the possibility of instituting a regular programme of similar courses or of incorporating a large language laboratory element in the general teacher-training course which has already been proposed to the Ministry of Education.

4.4 Any future teacher-training courses, whether basic or on the language laboratory should incorporate any new materials being prepared for Saudi Arabian schools and would entail close cooperation with the publisher.

M J Stimson

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